

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please AMEND claims 1-3 and 5-8, and ADD new claims 10-18, as follows. For the Examiner's convenience, all claims currently pending have been reproduced below.

1. (Currently Amended) A sheet processing apparatus aligning and stacking a sheet comprising:

[[a]] stacking means ~~for stacking~~ which stacks the sheet or sheet bundle;

[[a]] conveying means ~~for conveying~~ which conveys the sheet or sheet bundle toward the stacking means;

[[a]] sheet rear end aligning means ~~for aligning~~ which aligns a rear end of the sheet or sheet bundle upon pressing toward the stacking means the rear end of the sheet or sheet bundle conveyed by the conveying means; and

[[a]] controlling means ~~for controlling~~ which controls operation of the sheet rear end aligning means,

wherein the controlling means controls the operation of the sheet rear end aligning means so that acceleration of the sheet or sheet bundle by pressing of the sheet rear end aligning means satisfies a relation:

$$\alpha \leq \mu 1' g \text{ and } \alpha \leq \mu 2' g$$

where acceleration of the sheet or bundle by pressing of the sheet rear end aligning means at a time that the sheet rear end aligning means presses the rear end of the sheet or sheet bundle to align the rear end, is denoted as α , where gravitational acceleration is denoted as g , where coefficient of kinetic friction between the sheet or sheet bundle pressed by the sheet rear end aligning means and the stacking means is denoted as $\mu 1'$, and where coefficient of kinetic

friction between the sheet or sheet bundle pressed by the sheet rear end aligning means and the sheet or sheet bundle already stacked on the stacking means is denoted as μ_2' .

2. (Currently Amended) The sheet processing apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising a processing means capable of temporarily stacking the sheets, disposed on an upstream side of the stacking means and the conveying means in the sheet conveyance direction ~~for processing the sheet or sheet bundle~~, wherein the sheet or sheet bundle processed at the processing means is conveyed to the stacking means by the conveying means.

3. (Currently Amended) The sheet processing apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the processing means includes a processing tray capable of temporarily stacking the sheets, an aligning means ~~for aligning~~ which aligns the sheets stacked on the processing tray, and a stapling means ~~for stapling~~ which staples the sheet bundle aligned by the aligning means.

4. (Original) The sheet processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the stacking means has a stacking surface extending substantially horizontally for stacking the sheet or sheet bundle.

5. (Currently Amended) An image forming apparatus comprising:
an image forming apparatus ~~for aligning and stacking the sheet delivered from the~~
~~image forming apparatus body, which forms an image on a sheet; and~~
a sheet processing apparatus which aligns and stacks the sheet or the sheet bundle
delivered from the image forming apparatus body,

wherein the sheet processing apparatus is as set forth in any one of claims 1 to 4.

6. (Currently Amended) An image forming apparatus ~~forming an image on a sheet,~~
comprising:

an image forming section ~~for forming~~ which forms an image on the a sheet;

[[a]] stacking means ~~for stacking~~ which stacks the sheet or sheet bundle on which
the image is formed by the image forming section;

[[a]] conveying means ~~for conveying~~ which conveys the sheet or sheet bundle
toward the stacking means;

[[a]] sheet rear end aligning means ~~for aligning~~ which aligns a rear end of the
sheet or sheet bundle upon pressing toward the stacking means the rear end of the sheet or sheet
bundle conveyed by the conveying means; and

[[a]] controlling means ~~for controlling~~ which controls operation of the sheet rear
end aligning means,

wherein the controlling means controls the operation of the sheet rear end aligning
means so that acceleration of the sheet or sheet bundle by pressing of the sheet rear end aligning
means satisfies a relation:

$$\alpha \leq \mu 1' g \text{ and } \alpha \leq \mu 2' g$$

where acceleration of the sheet or bundle by pressing of the sheet rear end aligning means at a
time that the sheet rear end aligning means presses the rear end of the sheet or sheet bundle to
align the rear end, is denoted as α , where gravitational acceleration is denoted as g , where
coefficient of kinetic friction between the sheet or sheet bundle pressed by the sheet rear end
aligning means and the stacking means is denoted as $\mu 1'$, and where coefficient of kinetic

friction between the sheet or sheet bundle pressed by the sheet rear end aligning means and the sheet or sheet bundle already stacked on the stacking means is denoted as μ_2' .

7. (Currently Amended) The sheet processing apparatus according to claim 6, further comprising [[a]] processing means capable of temporarily stacking the sheets, disposed on an upstream side of the stacking means and the conveying means in the sheet conveyance direction ~~for processing the sheet or sheet bundle~~, wherein the sheet or sheet bundle processed at the processing means is conveyed to the stacking means by the conveying means.

8. (Currently Amended) The sheet processing apparatus according to claim 7, wherein the processing means includes a processing tray capable of temporarily stacking the sheets, an aligning means ~~for aligning~~ which aligns the sheets stacked on the processing tray, and a stapling means for stapling the sheet bundle aligned by the aligning means.

9. (Original) The sheet processing apparatus according to claim 6, wherein the stacking means has a stacking surface extending substantially horizontally for stacking the sheet or sheet bundle.

10. (New) A sheet processing apparatus aligning and stacking a sheet comprising:
a stacking tray which stacks sheets or sheet bundles;
a conveying roller which conveys the sheet or the sheet bundle toward the
stacking tray;

a sheet rear end aligning wall which aligns a rear end of the sheet or the sheet bundle upon pressing toward the stacking tray the rear end of the sheet or the sheet bundle conveyed by the conveying roller; and

a controller which controls operation of the sheet rear end aligning wall,

wherein acceleration of the sheet or sheet bundle by pressing of the sheet rear end aligning wall is determined based on a kind of the sheet.

11. (New) The sheet processing apparatus according to claim 10, further comprising a processing tray capable of temporarily stacking the sheets, disposed on an upstream side of the stacking tray and the conveying roller in the sheet conveyance direction, wherein the sheet or the sheet bundle processed at the processing tray is conveyed to the stacking tray by the conveying roller.

12. (New) The sheet processing apparatus according to claim 11, further comprising alignment plates which align sheets in the sheet width direction, stacked on the processing tray, and a stapler unit which staples the sheets aligned by the alignment plates.

13. (New) The sheet processing apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the stacking tray has a stacking surface, extending substantially horizontally, which stacks the sheets or the sheet bundles.

14. (New) An image forming apparatus comprising:

an image forming apparatus body which forms an image on a sheet; and

a sheet processing apparatus which aligns and stacks the sheet or the sheet bundle delivered from the image forming apparatus body,

wherein the sheet processing apparatus is as set forth in any one of claims 10 to 13.

15. (New) An image forming apparatus forming an image on a sheet, comprising:

an image forming section which forms an image on the sheet;

a stacking tray which stacks sheets or sheet bundles on which the image is formed by the image forming section;

a conveying roller which conveys the sheet or the sheet bundle toward the stacking tray;

a sheet rear end aligning wall which aligns a rear end of the sheet or the sheet bundle upon pressing toward the stacking tray the rear end of the sheet or sheet bundle conveyed by the conveying roller; and

a controller which controls operation of the rear end aligning wall,

wherein acceleration of the sheet or the sheet bundle by pressing of the sheet rear end aligning wall is determined based on a kind of the sheet.

16. (New) The sheet processing apparatus according to claim 15, further comprising a processing tray capable of temporarily stacking the sheets, disposed on an upstream side of the stacking tray and the conveying roller in the sheet conveyance direction, wherein the sheet or sheet bundle processed at the processing tray is conveyed to the stacking tray by the conveying roller.

17. (New) The sheet processing apparatus according to claim 16, further comprising aligning plates which align the sheets in the sheet width direction, stacked on the processing tray, and a stapler unit which staples the sheets aligned by the aligning plates.

18. (New) The sheet processing apparatus according to claim 15, wherein the stacking tray has a stacking surface, extending substantially horizontally, which stacks the sheets or the sheet bundles.